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CONTENTS

Vol. XXX

October - December 2004

No. 4

Ragalakshana in Karnatic Music :

Ragavargeekarana Ragamanohari - Part II

by Dr. V. V. Srivatsa

5

From the Archives - Tradition in Karnatic Music

by R. Sulochana

13

Young Geniuses

by 'Garland' N. Rajagopalan

19

Music Therapy : Gaining an edge in health care system

by S. Sumathy

23

Music Appreciation - Part VI

Important Features of Indian Music

by Dr. Geetha Ravikumar

27

A Report - International Violin Concert at USA

by Dr. Mysore Manjunath

37

A Report - Dance Symposium on Choreography

by A. Seshan

39

Book Review - Scintillating Semmangudi Saga

by P. P. Ramachandran

50

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IN FOCUS

The second part of Srivatsa's article on 'Ragalakshana in Carnatic Music' is featured in this issue. That Carnatic music was and continues to be beset with anomalies is brought out in an article by R. Sulochana (revived from the archives) on a five day exposition of the late Musiri Subramanya Iyer at Delhi. The article on young geniuses by 'Garland Rajagopalan' highlights the life and contributions of two outstanding examples of this genre - Sarabha Sastri of Flute fame and Palghat Mani Iyer of Mridangam fame. The role of music therapy as an important accessory in medical management is brought out in Sumathy's article. Geetha Ravikumar continues her series on 'Music Appreciation'. The increasing importance of the role played by Carnatic music in the international music scene is highlighted in a report by Mysore Manjunath on an International Violin Conference in USA. Another report on the Dance Symposium organized by Shanmukhananda on 'Choreography' by A. Seshan makes interesting reading. This issue of Shanmukha concludes with P.P. Ramachandran's review of a book on Semmangudi by Shankar Venkataraman.

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RAGALAKSHANA IN KARNATIC MUSIC : RAGAVARGEEKARANA RAGAMANOORI - Part II by Dr. V. V. Srivatsa

RAGA MANOHARI

It would be evident by now that the topic titled "Raga Manohari" seeks to deal with the Mitra Ragas, ten in number, whose names end with "Manohari". The term "Manohari" is indicative of something that captures, captivates, enraptures. The musical content of these Manohari Ragas, their aesthetic nouveau is such that they appeal to the listener. The sequence chosen hereabove, for these "Manohari" Ragas is such that a string of Ragas, a "Ragaratnamalika" is created, with adequate scope for blending the Rasas and the musical content. Further, the sequence is a progression from the general to the special, from diversity to unity. Devamanohari, the first Raga, symbolises a generalised, a collective obeissance to all celestial powers, the Devas, after which we shall pass through passages in Ragas dedicated to other Deities like Kamala, Gouri, Shiva, Madhava, Saraswati etc. to conclude with an unqualified Manohari Raga. This sequence has a lot of esoteric significance, which the cogniscenti can perceive without much ado. The reasons for naming a Raga after a particular Deity are perhaps, apocryphal and obscure. A potential objection to this sequence of presentation is that the Melakarta

sequence is not, adhered to. Pleasure in listening precedes numerical exactitude.

1. Devamanohari

कवर्जित षाडवे ऽ यं रागो देवमनोहरी !
आरोहे च अवरोहे ध्रुवः सग्रहान्वितः ॥

Devamanohari is described by the Sangita Sampradaya Pradarshini as a Shadava Raga, devoid of the Gandhara Swara and with "Vakra" or regression characteristics in both the Arohana and the Avarohana at the Swara "Dha". Regretfully, there is a lack of unanimity on the swara structure of this Raga and four different views prevail in various musicological circles. These views are summarised hereunder:

View No.1 :

Arohana - Sa, Ri, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa
Avarohana - Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa, Ma, Ri, Sa

View No. 2 :

Arohana - Sa, Ri, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa
Avarohana - Sa, Ni, Pa, Ma, Ri, Sa,

View No. 3 :

Arohana - Sa, Ri, Ma, Pa, Ni, Dha, Ni, Sa
Avarohana - Sa, Ni, Dha, Ni, Pa, Ma, Ri, Sa

View No. 4 :

Arohana - Sa, Ri, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, Pa,
Ma, Pa, Ni, Ni, Sa
Avarohana - Sa, Ni, Dha, Ni, Pa, Ma, Ri, Sa.

If Devamanohari is a Shadava Raga, acceptance of View No.2 is precluded, as the Avarohana is Audava. The fourth view does not conform to the vakra structure generally accepted. The other views hold good.

Extensive use of the Nyasa and Jiva Swara, the Nishada, in this Bhashanga Raga imports grace, lilt or "Ranjakatva" to this Raga. Since the shruti of this Nishada gets boosted a little beyond normal level, this becomes a Bhashanga Raga. It is the absence of the Gandhara Swara that distinguishes Devamanohari from Durbar. Venkatamakhin has composed a Lakshya-Geeta in Dhruva-Roopaka Tala and Subbarama Dikshitar has contributed a sanchari in Matya Tala.

Another reason for choosing Devamanohari first is that the only varnam amongst the Manohari Ragas is in Devamanohari. Tyagarajaswami has composed three kritis, "Kula Birudu Brochukonnu", "Kanna Tandri Napai" and the famous song "Evarikai Avataram".

"Evarikaiyavataram" is a unique composition, belonging to the exclusive genre of a dozen "Samaksha Prashna Kritis" composed by Tyagarajaswami. Particulars with respect to other songs are given in an annexure. Several beautiful and delectable phrases such as Epudaina, Maharaja, Vedameeyamow, Melmiyaga, Modasadhana, Patucharita and Muniraja embellish the sahitya of this song. "Modasadhana" means a paradise of joy, highly reminiscent of the

Upanishadic term "Satchitananda". "Patucharita" in this song, does not reflect the cursory or casual meaning of clever or smart and Rama is portrayed as the foremost amongst warriors and heroes. The heart and core of this kriti is the question as to who is the Blessed Person who brought about the incarnation of Narayana as Rama.

In the Valmiki Ramayana, Brahma is portrayed as the motivator for Rama's incarnation. Driven to despair by the cruelty perpetrated by Ravana, the Devas turned to Brahma for solution, who after deep deliberation divined that Ravana was not immune to destruction by a mere mortal, a Manava. Brahma and Shiva had granted several boons consequent to which, they could not be Ravana's destroyer. Valmiki states that at the Putrakameshti performed by Dasharatha, Brahma was invisibly present and entreated Vishnu to incarnate as Dasharatha's son, when Vishnu came to accept His Havirbhaga.

In the Kamba Ramayana, Brahma and Shiva plead helplessness, after which the Devas collectively approached Vishnu, who promised his supplicants that he would incarnate. A problem emerges as Dasharatha had three wives symbolic of Fortune, Modesty and Fame (Sri, Hri, Kirti), which was resolved when Vishnu directed Adishesha, Chakra and Shanka to be born as Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna. Were the Devas, collectively speaking, the blessed ones who brought about the incarnation as Rama?

In Tulasidas' Ramacharitamana, we find that Narada, conceited after his victory over Kama who was deputed by Indra to destroy Narada's penance, is smitten by lust and the desire to win the hand of Swayamprabha, a princess created by Vishnu from his yogic prowess. Narada asks Vishnu to bestow on him, a beautiful form and Vishnu deciding to teach him a lesson, gave him a monkey's face. Swayamprabha chooses Vishnu, who came in disguise. Realising what happened, Narada cursed Vishnu that he will be separated from his wife and will be surrounded by monkeys, in fulfilment of which, Vishnu incarnated as Rama. Was Narada, the Blessed one?

Manu and his wife Shataroopta performed penance and sought the birth of a son (as a boon), who would be identical in all respects, to Vishnu. Since this was impossible, Vishnu blessed them that He will be born as their son, when they manifest as Dasharatha and Kousalya. Were they, the Blessed ones responsible for Ramavatara?

Above all, was the incarnation in compliance of His own promise that He will do so whenever Dharma was endangered?

Tyagarajaswami by calling himself as a pseudo - Muniraja draws an analogy with the real Muniraja, Janaka; Janaka offered Sita to Rama and Tyagaraja offers his Bhakti. In "Kulabirudu", we perceive the companionship or Sakhyabhava between Tyagaraja and Lord Rama, when the former chides the

latter that family tradition does not matter, whilst performance does.

Muthuswami Dikshitar has composed three kritis in Devamanohari, they being "Mahadevana" (Adi Tala), "Tripurasundari" (Adi Tala) and "Bharati Maddishana" (Roopaka Tala). In the charana of "Bharati Maddishana", Dikshitar shows his mettle in Sanskrit idiom, when he uses the Akshara ॠ (Lia) as the Prasa-yati in every line. Dikshitar declares Saraswati to be superior to Hari, Hara, Ganesha and Kumara, reminiscent of the passage "Nirantaram Bhakta" in his composition "Veenapustaka" in Raga Vegavahini.

Devamanohari was a Raga widely used in Thevaram and Tiruppugazh. Other popular songs in Devamanohari are "Neekela Na", "Palukavademi" with a racy chittaswaram passage and "Yarukkutaan Teriyum", the last being a composition of Gopalakrishna Bharati.

2. Kamalamanohari

Kamalamanohari is a Shadava, Shadjagraha, Rishabha Varja, Aroha Dhaivata Varja Raga.

Tradition is that this Raga was developed by the Venkatamakhin School. Dikshitar's Mudra for this Raga was "Manohari" and not "Kamala Manohari" perhaps, as a result of the popularity of Dikshitar's composition "Kanchadalayatankshi", this Raga came to be known as Kamalamanohari, resultant from an expression in that song. The chittaswaram passage in "Kanchadalayatankshi" is given in the

Sangita-Sampradaya Pradarshini and is not a latter day appendage. Another fine kriti by Dikshitar is "Sankaram Abhirami"

Venkatamakhin's followers consider this Raga to be an Upanga Raga affiliated to the 33rd Melakarta, Gangatarangini, a Vivadhi Mela with Shadshruti Rishabha. The absence of this Rishabha in Kamalamanohari removes the Vivadhi trait. Why then the need to consider this Raga as a derivative of a Vivadhi Melakarta? The swara structure is such that this can be an Upanga Raga of the 27th Melakarta, Sarasangi. In Kamalamanohari, the Swaras (Antara Gandhara, Suddha Madhyama, Suddha Dhaivata, Kakali Nishada) are similar with those in the Mayamalavagowla group. Hence, the apparent but incorrect similarity with Raga Jaganmohini. Jaganmohini has "Suddha Rishabha" in the Avarohana. The beauty of Kamalamanohari lies in the Antara Gandharam.

Kamala Manahori was used in Thevaram and Tiruppuzah. Tyagarajaswami has composed a short kriti "Nee Muddu Momu", rarely heard in concerts.

3. Gourimanohari

Students of hoary astrology are aware of system called Gouri Panchanga and of the auspicious periods everyday, when mortals would be blessed by the grace of Gouri. The Raga to be played at such periods is "Gauri Velavali"

रागो वैष्णवर्ण्यो आरोहे गनिर्वर्जितः ।
वैवत्तग्रह संयुक्तः प्रातः काले प्रगीयते ॥

Gauri Velavali is a Dhaivata Graha Raga, without Gandhara or Nishada in the Arohana and is to be sung in the morning. The structure of Gauri Velavali would be

Arohana Sa, Ri, Ma, Ma, Pa,
Dha, Dha, Sa.

Avarohana Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa, Ma,
Ga, Ri, Sa.

Gourimanohari is referred to by Vara Siva Yogi of Kollegal, a contemporary of Purandaradasa, in his "Battees Raga" scheme. Vara Siva Yogi set to music the sayings or Vachanas of Saint Basaveshwara. I cannot forget the rendition of a Vachana "Maya Beda Kolla Beda" in Gourimanohari, by Shri Mallikarjun Mansur. In Gourimanohari, the Arohana was Sampoorana. The presence of Chatashruti Rishabha is not conducive to Gourimanohari being called as a morning raga. The Sampoorana Raga, Gourimanohari, integrated into itself, the incomplete Gauri Velavali and the revised swara structure is :

Arohana Sa, Ri, Ga, Sa, Ri, Ma,
Pa, Dha, Ni, Sa

Avarohana Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa, Ma,
Ga, Ri, Sa.

Gourimanohari emerges thus as a Sampoorana, Raganga, Dhaivata Graha Raga in the Raga Moorchna of which Ma and Dha give particular lilt or Vishesha Ranjana. Sa, Ri, Ga, Ga, Sa, is a Vishesha Prayoga. Similarity with Kiravani

is noticed in passages such as "Ma, Pa, Ma, Ga, Ri, Sa": Though the Kakali Nishada is a common factor between Kiravani and Gourimanohari, the distinction of the Dhaivata should be noted.

In Gauri Velavali, we have a Lakshya Geeta and Tana by Venkatamakhin, a Sanchari in Chatushra Ata Tala by Subbarama Dikshitar and two kritis, "Kowmari Gauri Velavali" and "Parashakti" by Muthuswami Dikshitar. In Gourimanohari, the most famous composition is Tyagarajaswami's "Guruleka Yetuvanti". The kriti "Brovasamaya" by Garbhapurivasa (Karur Dakshinamoorthy Sastri) is quite popular. I have heard Vellore Sambandamoorthy Achari render a Tiruppugazh "Karikuzhal Kariyamukham" in Gourimanohari set to Chatushra Dhruva Tala in Khanda Gati. Gourimanohari used by Mysore Vasudevachar, Muthaiah Bhagavathar and other modern composers is a Sarvakalika Raga, though the best effect emerges when sung just after mid-day.

An Upanga Raga of Gourimanohari, called Gouri Lalita is seldom heard. This Upanga Raga is devoid of 'Pa' and all other swaras are similar to the parent Raga.

4. Isamanohari

षड्जग्रह च सम्पूर्णा भवदीशमनोहरी।

Isamanohari is a Sampoorana Bhashanga Raga, derived from the 28th Melakarta Raga, Harikhamboji. It becomes a Bhashanga Raga by virtue

of the presence of Kakali Nishada in passages like Sa, Ni, Sa and Ri, Ni, Sa. In passages like Sa, Dha, Ni, Sa and Pa, Ni, Dha, Pa, Sa, Sa, we see a lot of Shadja Nyasa. Despite a high degree of sonic similarity with Raga Umabharanam, the narrow distinction lies in the fact that the gandhara is not used in the Avarohana in Umabharanam.

As usual, there is a Lakshya Geeta by Venkatamakhin and a Mattya Tala Sanchari by Subbarama Dikshitar. Muthuswami Dikshitar has composed three kritis in Isamanohari, they being "Sri Gananatham" (Roopaka Tala), "Jagadisa Manohari" (Roopaka Tala) and Ananta Balakrishna (Adi Tala) Tyagarajaswami composed two kritis - "Sri Janaki Manohara" and the popular "Manasa Sri Ramachandruni". This is one Raga where both Tyagarajaswami and Dikshitar have adopted similar patterns in their compositions especially prayogas like Ma, Ri, Sa. "Manasa Sri" is an Atmopadesha song in which Tyagarajaswami preaches to his own mind, reminding us of the verse in the Bhagavat Gita that ones mind is his best friend and worst enemy too!

आत्मैवरात्मनो बन्धुः आत्मैविरपुरात्मनः॥

The Anupallavi of this song gives scope for wide interpretation. Tyagarajaswami advises his mind to constantly refer to the third and sixth chapters (Adhyaya) of Valmiki Ramayana. Valmiki Ramayana is Sarga based and not Adhyaya based, notwithstanding which, Kalluri

Veerabhadra Shastri and T. S. Balakrishna Sastrigal opine that reference is to the third and sixth Sargas of the Balakanda. K. V. Srinivasa Ayyanagar and Dr.V. Raghavan differ from the view stating that reference is to the third and sixth Adhyaya of the Adhyatma Ramayana, in which the Avatara - Rahasya of Rama and Sita are postulated. In the charana of this song, Tyagarajaswami states "Srushti, Pushti, Nashti Sayu Panulu", which can be compared with the text in the Taittiriya. Upanishad यदो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते and Adi-Sankara's commentary on the second Brahma-sutra.

5. Madhavamanohari

सम्पूर्णा सग्रहोपेता आरोहे तु ध वक्तिः।
पवर्जितावरोहे च स्यान् माघवमनोहरी।

Madhavamanohari is a Bhashanga Raga of the 22nd Melakarta with a Vakra-Sanchara in the Arohana at 'Dha' and in which 'Pa' is omitted in Avarohana. The scale is :

Arohana Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Ni,
Dha, Ni, Sa
Avarohana Sa, Ni, Dha, Ma, Ga,
Ri, Sa

The presence of Suddha Dhaivata in passages such as Ma, Pa, Dha, Ma, Ga, Sa and Maa, Dha, Ma, Ga, Ri, Sa renders this as a Bhashanga Raga. In this Raga, the swara Ma gives the grace and is the Jiva and Nyasa Swara.

As is customary, there is a Lakshya Geeta "Katidati Kamakapadi" by Venkatamakhin and a Sanchari in Mattya Tala by Subbarama Dikshitar. The solitary kriti in this Raga is "Mahalakshmi Karunarasa Lahari", by Muthuswami Dikshitar. This song, belonging to a select group of songs on Lakshmi (such as Varalakshmi Bhaja, Sri Varalakshmi and Mangaladevataya) is embellished by superb phrases such as "Vedanute", "Shivasahite" "Manasavira-jite", "Mahadevavishvasini" and "Manonmani". Dikshitar equates Lakshmi with Devi by means of the expression "Shivasahite".

6. Saraswatimanohari

त्यक्तपद्मे आरोहे सरस्वतीमनोहरी ।
अवरोहे रिवक्रस्यात् सग्रह सर्वकालिकः ।

Saraswatimanohari is a Bhashanga Raga in which the Panchama is omitted in the Arohana and there is vakra in the Avarohana at the swara "Ri".

The swara scale is :

Arohana Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Dha,
Dha, Ni, Sa
Avarohana Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa, Ma,
Ga, Ma, Ri, Sa

In this Raga, Dhaivata is the Jiva Swara and that which imparts Ranjakatva. The Shruti level of 'Ni' drops slightly in Sancharas such as Dha, Ni, Pa, wherefore it is a Bhashanga Raga. Swara Sancharas such as: Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Dha, Pa, Ma, Dha, Sa and Ma, Pa,

Dha, Sa are sung in this Raga. In fact Subbarama Dikshitar eschews the use of Dha, Ni, Sa. Controversy dogs the genesis of this Raga, one school opining that this is a Bhashanga Raga belonging to the 28th Melakarta, while another school considers this is a Bhashanga Raga of the 29th Melakarta Raga. This Raga is deemed as Bhashanga by virtue of a drop in the shruti of the Swara 'Ni', wherefore it would be correct to construe that the drop is from the higher or Kakali Nishada. It is advisable to treat this Raga as a Bhashanga of the 29th Melakarta, the view held by the Venkatamakhin school. The Arohana Swaras of Saraswatimanohari and Malavi are identical. However, the Avarohana of Malavi is Sa, Ni, Pa, Ma, Ri, Sa, omitting the Dhaivata and Gandhara, while in Saraswatimanohari, the Prayoga Ma, Ga, Ma, Ri, Sa is a characteristic feature of the Avarohana.

The Lakshya Geeta by Venkatamakhin, "Jaya Jaya Raghu Kula" is in Jhampa Tala and the Sanchari by Subbarama Dikshitar is in Eka Tala. We have in this Raga, one composition each by Muthuswami Dikshitar and Tyagarajaswami. In Dikshitar's Kriti "Saraswati Manohari", we see distinct but distant nuances of Raga Kannada, strengthening thereby, the classification under the 29th Melakarta. This view is upheld by the Tillaisthanam School's doyen, Sri S. Parthasarathi. In "Enthavedu Kondu" by Tyagarajaswami, passages like "Chinta teerchuda" and "Sattamatrama" are reflective of Sankarabharanam. The song "Enthavedu" belonging to the select group of Samaksha - Prashna Kritis has Tyagaraja describing Lord Rama as his inner-soul or "Antaratma". A perfect, Advaitic concept indeed. □

(To be continued)

ANNEXURE

List of Samaksha-Prashna Kritis by Sri Tyagarajaswami

Etula Brotuvo (Chakravakam), *Evarani Nimayinchirra* (Devamrutavarshini), *Evarura Ninnuvina* (Mohanam), *Evarimata* (Khamboji), *Ethavunara* (Kalyani), *Elanidayaradu* (Athana), *Elavaramethu* (Mukhari), *Evarikai Avataram* (Devamanohari), *Endundi* (Darbar), *Enthavedukondu* (Saraswatimanohari), *Enduku Nirdaya* (Harikhamboji) and *Enduku Dayaradu* (Todi).



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From the Archives

TRADITION IN KARNATIC MUSIC by R. Sulochana

The five-day lecture-demonstrations by Musiri Subramanya Iyer, sponsored by The Sree Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Sabha, New Delhi, were an experiment at dissemination of knowledge of music. The delineations were mainly on Raga Lakshanas; Niraval and Swaram; and Sampradaya in Karnatic Music. First of its kind, the experiment brought out the truisms often lost in the flood of "modernism" and "chauvinism".

We can boast of an enviable legacy of music left by tradition, which is worshipped as a deity, and yet has its doors open to improvements and recreations. The latter, it is necessary to remember, do not mean "innovations". Through the medium of the two-fold manifestations of the "objective" science and "subjective" art of music, Musiri presented a powerful plea for the preservation of tradition in this sense. The accent was on the old Guru-Shishya curricula as an ideal medium of preservation.

For delineations on the scientific aspect, Musiri chose a selected few Raga Lakshanas (characteristics of Ragas) for his enunciations.

The uniqueness of Indian music lies in the repertory of Ragas. Constituted fundamentally on the mathematical

principle of permutations and combinations, with seven notes and their variants (except Shadja and Panchama which are indivisible) as their base, the 72 Melakarta Ragas originate a number of Janya Ragas, some with only hair breadth difference. Each of them possesses an individuality that can be perceived mainly from the Sancharas (sound groupings) exclusive to it. The emphasis should, therefore, be more on practical exposition, than on paperwork, though the basic notes of a Raga and its abstract entity are essential for the construction of its structure.

The metamorphosis that has come over the Ragas, either deliberately imported or unconsciously, because of "innovations" that just crept in, is detrimental to the individuality of the Ragas. Perhaps the casualness shown to the "rules" of Ragas was one of the reasons for the deterioration, although "innovations" were not completely absent in the works of maestros. The anomaly that a Raga suffers of losing its "original character and intrinsic ingredients", in the event becomes clear, when the errors in the guise of embellishments that have caused crevices in the form are recognized.

This part of Musiri's lecture was devoted entirely to the ethics of music,

and enumeration of the flaws and suggestions on ways of rectification - though only suggestively - by quoting from the compositions of the Musical Trinity of the South India. There was no true exploration into the structure of the Ragas which were taken up for enunciation in detail - the time of their application with reason, the scope they afforded for elaboration, the different Rasas (moods) they depicted, etc. Nor was adequate attention paid to the flexibility of a Raga and the exemptions and concessions permitted in it. The consummation, or an authoritative verdict on the points at issue projected in the proceedings was thus absent. The sketchy diagnosis shorn of logical analysis - and the matter-of-fact prescriptions without qualifications and reasonings - left the keen students of music half-way - at any rate so far as the science part of it was concerned. All told the lecture-demonstrations were helpful neither to layman nor to the elite although it did contain hints of educative value.

Maybe the non-committal attitude of sticking to the middle path, so to say, was due to Musiri's catholicity. But he could with advantage have adopted the policy of the Experts' Committee of the Music Academy of Madras - i.e., of examining the views of the various schools and arriving at a near-perfect decision.

To be sure, Chatusruti Rishabha and Kakali Nishada often corroded into their Suddha and Kaisiki counterparts of

Todi in the phrases, *ga ri ga* and *sa ni sa*, robbing it of its beauty. But Musiri failed to state how these flagrant violations completely changed the Raga Todi and dumped it on Kiravani in the scheme of Melakarta Ragas (from 8 to 21).

Most of the Todi's offshoots suffered, as the lecturer observed, from encroachment of Kakali Nishada - e.g., Asaveri, Punnagavarali. Ahiri's ways of admitting foreign notes (Bhashanga) of Antara Gandhara and Chatusruti Dhaivata were well-expounded with the rendering of *Adhaya Sri Raghu*.

The confusion of Bhupalam with Bauli, a modern corruption, was resented. For, not only is the parentage of these Ragas different but their Avarohana (descent) also differ. While Bhupalam dispenses with Nishada, Bauli retains it; and the Gandhara of the former is Sadharana while that of the latter is Antara.

As illustration of how improvisations altered the structural qualities of a Raga, Saveri, a derivation of Mayamalavagowla came for examination. (The phrases, *sa ri ga ma ga ga ri* for *sa ri maa ga ri*; and *ni sa ri ga ri sa ni dha* instead of *dha sa ri ga ri sa ni dha* are two examples.) The exactitude of Antara Gandhara in the descent, avoiding a flat note is essential, while Kakali Nishada needs to be slightly extended to a near Shadja. These adjustments are essential for bringing out the Svarupa (form) of the Raga and is provided for in the science.

A sandwiched Madhyama for Gowlipantu and Dhaivata for Vasantha were new revelations.

Natabhairavi and its Janya Ragas provoked much controversy, but not convincingly attended to. The ancient Bhairavi was said to have had a twisted ascent - which has now been dispensed with - *Sa gaa ri ga maa pa da pa ma paa dha ni Sa* - with the Gandhara slightly stretched so as not to mix up with Ananda Bhairavi.

The points relating to Ananda Bhairavi gave rise, in some respects, to misgivings. Musiri dubbed the occurrence of Antara Gandhara and Kakali Nishada, its foreign notes, operatic. Though condemnation of Nishada could be acquiesced in, as this note comes in only by implication, that of Gandhara needed further elucidation. The example chosen by Musiri - *Neemadichallaga*, and *O Jagadamba* - were no doubt devoid of this Gandhara but, what argument has he to offer for Syama Sastri's Kriti, *Mariveragathi*, where the phrase *ga ga ma* takes Antara Gandhara? Maybe, Musiri was upholding Venkatamakhi's contention that this Raga was Upanga and not Bhashanga.

The double standards of Dhaivata in Hindolam were yet another point of controversy. There was no final verdict on which of the Dhaivatas - Suddha used by Muthuswamy Dikshitar, or Chatusruti, patronized by Thyagaraja - should hold the ground. However, Dikshitar's admixture of Carnatic Hindolam and Hindustani Malkauns has become

popular, though Thyagaraja's diction has not completely faded out.

The subtlety of Manji - the form of which depends more on the Bhava than on the notes constituting it - with its microscopic difference from Bhairavi, but positively with a separate entity, was excellently demonstrated. The exposition corroborated the Experts' Committee's conclusions of 1948.

Musiri's definitions of Harikambhoji and its offshoots were an eye-opener to many among the laity. The controversy over its nomenclature - Harikambhodi or Harikambhoji - was straightened out through a clue from Dikshitar's use of Kambhoja. The latter therefore was adopted.

Another enlightenment was the transfer of *Sanitodi*, a Kriti of Thyagaraja, from Harikambhoji to Khamas. Musiri sang out relevant excerpts from that piece in justification.

Coming to Kambhoji, the speaker ruled out the presence of Kakali Nishada and argued that the *Proyoga sa ni pa dha sa* is actually *sa sa pa dha sa* - the second *sa* sung with Nishada tinge. A correct form was given by him for initiating the Kambhoji Alapana. It should not, he said, begin with Gandhara, avoiding Dhaivata and Nishada which create an illusion of Kalyani and Shankarabharanam. Digressing a little, he said the very commencement should bear the crux (Bhava) of the Raga to be delineated.

Nilambari, an off-shoot of Shankarabharanam (29th Mela) in text

books, was placed under Harikambhoji (28th Mela) for the only reason of the rare occurrence of Kaisiki Nishada. Presumably, the shifting illustrates the mathematical sacrifice in favour of form and Bhava.

The Sama-Arabhi-Devagandhari entanglements were convincingly cleared. It is the location of Gandhara, said Musiri, that makes all the difference between them. While the first and the third boast of a Gandhara stretched, the second only touches it. In Nishada, Devagandhari differentiates itself from Arabhi, which despite its original intake of the note, more often than not, eschews it. Examples: the Charana Swaras in Thyagaraja Pancharatna kriti, *Sadhinchene*.

Among the rest, Atana and Ritigowla carried original observations. The exposure of the catchy *ni sa ga ma ri sa* in Atana sung even by top musicians was welcome. But the *pa dha ni sa* in the Uttaranga (second half) of Ritigowla was absolutely novel, and passages in *Janani* rendered in illustration appeared a contrivance not confirmed by conventions.

The monotony of ethics minus logic that pervaded the 'science' of music was mitigated when the 'art' with greater emphasis on imagination came on the agenda.

Once freed from the shackles of ethics, Musiri Subramanya Iyer, concentrated on the obverse of the coin - its practical part. This departure in the basic approach, thanks to the

questionnaire presented by a connoisseur, helped him to a greater extent, to come out with his "self", giving the subjects - Niraval, Swaraprastharas and Pallavi - a practical exposition. These three put together are the yardstick for measuring the creative genius of a musician and his capacity to interpret. As such even anomalies come under censure not for any violation of ethics but their incompatibility.

The three-in-one Niraval (the even distribution of lyrics among the various components of the Tala on the lines set by the Raga) could, said Musiri, fulfil its purpose of bringing out all potentialities enshrined in the lyrics only when the latter were brief. Put in simple terms, only passages with lesser word-content but greater depth of meaning, are fit for this "levelling". Not only this, words need to be elastic enough to paint the various moods of the Raga and reach the finale, i.e., Bhava. To strike the goal a three-stage formula of slow, medium and fast tempos built in geometrical progression was adopted.

It was Musiri's unshakeable conviction that the austere form of Niraval never yielded to new-fangled operations. Only two courses could take place: presentation in its pure form or complete distortion. However, Musiri did not examine whether or not in fast tempo, the sense got distorted in the hurly-burly of word-race with timecycle.

The Swaraprastharas (weaving of note-patterns) received a shake-up from Musiri. True, as he said, love for

mathematics has completely clipped the wings of imagination. Highly bedecked with Gathis and Jathis, the Swaraprastharas, he deplored, have fallen to mere sabre-rattling, creating an illusion of duel between the art and the artiste. The spontaneity (Sarvalaghu), an indispensable factor - though difficult in practice, requiring constant rigid practice and yogic control over one's breath - has been over-powered by mere gymnastics, and the whole content presents more or less a blood-curdling hurdle-race. Here Musiri had a dig at women artistes, generally victims of this disease on account of their 'advantageous' voice-factor.

The shuffling in of Alapana in Swara-permutations was diplomatically brushed aside as unnecessary. Instead, Musiri should have honestly admitted it as a trade-trick adopted either to remove the clots in imagination or to serve as a stimulant for further creation.

Pallavi, a feature exhaustively scanning the triangular aspects of Music - Raga, Sahitya and Tala - was given a two-dimensional study: one its definition and the other history; and both contained elements of controversy.

Simplicity in all facets was the call of the speaker. Meant to be extempore rendering Pallavi should, said Musiri, be lucid, set to a comfortable easy-going sort of Tala (Adi being the ideal choice). A lengthy one, spun on an intricate Tala would, he feared, leave the artiste in the lurch at any stage of detailed delineation. But in voicing his fear Musiri ignored the

other side of the argument, which he himself presented. If, as he insisted, an artiste should *live* through the line he delineates, there is no question of his getting lost midstream.

Imagination should never be allowed to run riot; it should, on the other hand, be harnessed to Tala and Raga. However, such a venture would put the accompanists at sea, though they should be prepared for such trials.

Simplicity could have been the forte of Pallavi in the bygone ages when it was instantly composed. Today with our readymade standards, if the same principle were to be followed, the spirit of adventure in the musician would be killed and musical excellence of Pallavi thrown to the winds. Again, on the choice of Ragas for Pallavi - an important aspect - nothing was said.

In tracing the history too, Musiri sought refuge in ambiguities. Narrating the supercession of extempore rendering by readymade Pallavis, he adverted to plagiarism (politely named Plural Sahitya), though not an offence but an appreciation in music, played on the notation. The instance he quoted in illustration raised a doubt as to who played the game, since it differed from a more authentic version. According to him, Ramanathapuram Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar (1860 - 1919) lifted the notation for his Pallavi, *Chakkaga Ni Bhajana*, from that of Patnam Subramanya Iyer 1845 - 1902 (whose name he did not

(Continued on page 36)

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YOUNG GENIUSES by 'Garland' N. Rajagopalan

Reminiscences confer multiple boons and benefits. Apart from being welcome tributes to the memory and legacy of gracious men and women or memorable incidents of grace and grandeur, they help to educate, enlighten elevate and inspire. And where they relate to young geniuses, they command added significance and relevance. In this light, the summary of the lives highlighted in *Shanmukha* XXX-3 helps to refresh memory and inspire the young. Let me add just a few more.

This young flautist and *Kalakshapa* artiste of later days lacked the benefit of physical vision from the age of three having lost it due to smallpox; but his inner soul continued to shine and radiate with all its innate effulgence from its start in all its glorious best. He was besides an *eka santha grahi* - one who could assimilate what is heard just once.

Sarabha Sastri was that artiste of eminence. Probably the name *Sarabhanandana tala* or the excellent icon in adjacent Thirubhuvanam of Sri Sarabha Murthy earned that name for him. Here is the factual account given by the competent flautist-*guru* of Kalakshetra, H. Ramachandra Sastri.

Opposite to the house of that young flautist in Solaiappan Street, Kumbakonam, lived Vedic Scholar Narayana Ganapadigal who taught many students *Veda* as was the *karna parampara* practice from the days of

Vedas till a few decades back. One may recall the fact that it was all *nishkama* practice. Either the disciple was part of the *gurukula*, which was not mandatory, or he turned up for the classes alone. At the request of the young Sarabha, his fond elder brother requested Ganapadigal to go over to his house. The boy prostrated in prayerful mood, stood before him with all respect and humility like a statute of Phralad, Dhruva or Markandeya come to life with a plate in hand containing clothes and fifteen rupees [a very big sum then] and confided,

'I am your disciple. Here is my humble *Guru dakshina* [offering to preceptor]. Pray, be gracious to accept it'.

'No, no, Sarabha. How can I ever be your *Guru*! I know very little of Carnatic music.'

'Kindly be pleased to take your seat, listen to me and then decide whether I am fit to be your pupil or not.'

Ganapadigal sat down, a very picture of wonder, on the wooden plank placed for him and the boy commenced *Vedic* recitation. There flowed chaste, authentic, uninhibited *Vedic* recitation from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. with torrential regularity and immaculate precision from the pupil. Ganapadigal sat stilled, frozen by wonder. Had he ever taught him a word of what he recited with absolute *patantara* precision? No. Has he ever sat with other students on the pial of his own

house? No. He had been seen a mute figure on the pial of his own house in the opposite row sitting like a monument in meditation and evidently, as it had been demonstrated, all the time assimilating *in toto* all that the good *Pandit* had taught his students.

'Child! I have heard but had not come across any '*eka santha grahi*' in this life even in this cradle of wisdom [Kumbakonam]! You are that great first person in proof of that. I shall gladly accept the *guru dakshina* and it is honour to me. May you be ever great!'

That student, revered *Sarabha Sastri*, the flautist prodigy without eyesight lived briefly like Sankara, Vivekananda, Bharati etc. from 1872 to 1904 only. Where there is commitment and undivided attunement and dedication, knowledge embraces the mind *suo motu* like the fond mother with her favourite child got by penance and prayer. *His life holds out a lesson to all young practitioners.*

Perhaps another incident on him which would unfold his eminence is welcome. Lord Krishna was flautist in the divine category. Aanaaya Nayanar was flautist in the apostle category. It was *Sarabha* who installed flute as a concert worthy instrument and insured its majesty and merit, grade and rank in the competing world of instruments. We shift to the venue of this event, the house of Seshagiri Sastri, near the Kapaliswara tank, Mylapore. '*Sita Kalyanam*' was the theme of a *Kalakshepa*. This account is

by Sangita Kala Sikhamani T. Lakshmana Pillai, a luminary of those days.

'Young *Sarabha* was brought on the shoulders of a helper and "deposited" to give that discourse. When *Sarabha* gave a classical description of the eyes of Sri Rama and made a captivating comparison to the lotus, I was moved to tears. My receptive mind cried in pathos and wondered, "Lord! He is not blessed with eyesight to gather a view of the very flower he so graphically describes. Alas! What an irony of Fate! What *Karma* could such a meek soul committed in its previous birth? For he could not have done anything in this brief life to deserve such a fate.'

That is an honest fulsome tribute to the genius of that wonderful youth who was widely respected and his name still resounds with respect even as Sri Tyagaraja Swami Aradhana Ustav commences since it was he who commenced the flute rendition of *Sethulara*. He was a genius *par excellence*. Flute came to its own because of his eminence and handling of that ancient instrument.

Lives of child prodigies enthuse and inspire and have a fascination to all.

From 1904 when *Sarabha Sastri* discarded his mortal coils, one may shift to June 12, 1912 when another young prodigy was born. If *Sarabha's* nimble hand did the magic with the *bamboo flute* [*Pullaanguzhal tanda moongilgale*,

Purushottaman pugazh paadungale is scintillating song in praise of the bamboo instrument], it was the creative brilliance of deft fingers of a pair of hands that created history in the case of young prodigy, **Palghat Mani Ayyar**, a colossus among percussionists, undisputed master of percussion and a legend in his own lifetime.

He was just twelve years old then. The gracious hearted Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavata, who always had a fancy for young aspirants, brought him to be his accompanist on mridangam for a concert at Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha, Chennai with veteran Dakshinamurthy Pillai on Kanjira. Everybody wondered how this child could cope with the music of the veteran and Kanjira of another veteran. It looked like a joke to have a boy to accompany the veteran in a reputed sabha. As Chembai persisted with his choice, the Sabha kept a substitute ready to step in. Trouble started even in the first instance as Pudukottai Pillai had occupied the place normally taken by mridangist. The lad protested and strangely, the mridangam was also

missing, like the missing of the sacred *mangalya sutra* in a wedding! Gracious musical heart and smiling eminence, that was Chembai, solved it all taking the lad to his side like duo musicians taking places and commenced his concert. Once it got started, it was *amrita varsha* and Mani was no lad as they saw him in physical mould but a brilliant percussionist in full flow like Kerala rivers in floods to match the calibre of the maestro of Pudukottai! All felt elated and Chembai was the architect and jeweller who brought him to the first and significant concert and the lad literally hit up 'a test hundred in both the innings full of sixers and boundaries alone' to borrow a phrase from sports. Palghat Mani had no occasion to look back. He shot to imminent fame and rightfully, he is remembered by all with respect. The disciple of Thanjavur Vaidyanatha Ayyar presented thrilling, exhilarating percussion to the delight of all connoisseurs and lay *rasikas*. He is another youth prodigy whose advents shall delight young aspirants. □





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MUSIC THERAPY: GAINING AN EDGE IN HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

by S. Sumathy*

Throughout history, the idea of music as a therapeutic influence has been present and it is not something new to us, in India. There have been very many authenticated documents and anecdotal experiences existing in our system to vouch for its therapeutic potential. The pleasant experience on hearing music, soothes and comforts the mind and body and more so even influences cognition and thus the use of music to influence both psychological and physiological processes in health as well as in disease, is being recognized recently by the medical professionals which has led to the use of music as a complementary medicine in clinical settings to ensure a holistic approach in treating an individual of both the mind and the body.

Clinical concerns are gaining an edge to include not only the patient's physical needs but also his/her psychosocial well-being.

Music therapy: A bio psycho social model

It is only when the body and the mind go together, a harmony or to put it in a scientific term, a homeostasis is maintained in our human system. Any disturbance in the homeostasis brings a

disharmony in mind and body. A disharmony in our thoughts, feelings and disharmony in cellular and tissue levels, results in illness both physiologically and psychologically

The bio psycho social model of health insists that the mind and body are not separate units, they are two aspects of a person and health and illness are not physical or mental, rather it is both physical and mental. Disease is no more just signs and symptoms but also ill feelings and a holistic approach is warranted in treating a person and this is where music comes in to the picture of treating the diseased in a holistic manner. Music has a potential to address the physiological, psychological and social needs of an individual.

Many experiments have documented the influences of music on physiological responses like pulse rate, respiration rate, blood pressure and muscular tension. Also clinical research and studies suggest the important role of auditory rhythm in motor control and the rehabilitation of movement disorders. Studies also suggest the control of stress related cortisol secretion and increase of catecholamine secretion upon music therapy interventions. Music has been found to alleviate anxiety levels, enhance

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moods and elicit relaxation responses resulting in peace and comfort. Also music is a great tool for communication and emotional expression and a good companion for the sick and lonely people.

Music: A human phenomenon

Musical elements like tone, pitch, melody and rhythm center around human lives in all their activities. The very nature of life is rhythm. There is rhythm in our heart beat, pulsations, respiration, circulation of blood and rhythm in our gait and all other movements. When we speak, the different tones and pitches that we use, manifest different expressions like kindness, command, coldness, anger or submissiveness. The language that we use is nothing but simplification of music with distinct use of tone, pitch, rhythm accent, pause and rest and it is only when the language becomes complex with the sense of tone and rhythm outspread it becomes music. When there is a harmony in these musical elements in the human system and there is a tendency toward rhythm in all measures, the system is disease free and the whole mechanism of body and mind is in unison. When there is a break of rhythm in emotions, feelings, thoughts and physiological measures, there is disharmony and illness.

The healing power of music lies in its rhythmic entrainment with the body and the mind when presented as an external stimuli. The required rhythm is brought about by the principle of musical

entrainment by which our psyche and body become entrained to the sonic environment created by the music.

Indian music system

The uniqueness of Indian Music with its raga system, the innumerable rhythmic patterns and the embellishments contributing to the Bhava, the spiritual content of the vast repertoire of compositions in varied languages form a very rich and concrete basis for the therapeutic effects. The two indigenous systems of Indian Music, Carnatic and Hindustani to suit the diverse culture of the country in different languages also facilitate to produce custom made music to cater to the individual tastes. Various factors like different kinds of Kalapramana specifically used in the compositions, the lyric, the tonal configuration of each raga contribute to the emotive appeal depending on the external influences like the cultural background, form of music, lyric, style of presentation, educational level of the client, musical training and the context in which the client listens to the music etc.

Music therapy as an organized system of complementary medicine

The necessity to practice music therapy in a systematic and organized manner in spite of its use as a complementary medicine in clinical settings is warranted to give a scientific endorsement to the ancient practice and also to promote music therapy potentials

in an objective manner in spite of music being a subjective experience. Unlike in the West, music therapy practices are not organized and systematic here, with fully trained music therapists undertaking the therapeutic role. Institutional music therapy courses are a few in number and also mass awareness is to be created among the public about the potentials of music for health and illness. Music therapists have to be adequately educated, trained and experienced to undertake therapy sessions in a specific clinical setting. Systematic procedures have to be followed before administration of music therapy to an individual. The individual has to be assessed for his listening patterns, his likes and dislikes of various forms of music, his cultural background, his musical upbringing, his knowledge in music etc before treatment planning. Custom made music and not music of technical excellence is to be chosen. Whether it is classical music or devotional music or light music or bhajans, the individual's receptivity and his belief in the system which are of more importance than the technical excellence of the musical piece chosen for the therapy.

Music and Psychotherapy

Music therapy can be defined in many ways and has four components. The client or the patient, the therapist, the musical experience and the therapeutic process

"Music therapy is a systematic process of intervention wherein the therapist helps the client to achieve health, using musical experiences and the relationships that develop through them as dynamic forces of change." (Bruscia, 1989)

The client or the patient who seeks the help of a music professional because of health related needs -

- * The therapist who is professionally trained to help the client, to address the needs of the client or the patient.
- * The therapeutic process is defined as the purposeful engagement between the client and the therapist using Music as a tool or a medium to bring about non musical changes in the client through relationships like client-music and client-therapist.
- * The musical experience is the experience of the client by undergoing the musical treatment, be it, active participation or passive listening using music as a tool.
- * The music therapist takes the role of a counselor in providing a suitable therapeutic atmosphere and a music tool by which the client is able to address his physiological, psychological and social needs. The role of the music therapist is just not to play music to the clients, but to be trustworthy, empathetic and have a unconditional positive regard to the client facilitating desirable changes. □

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Music Appreciation - Part VI

IMPORTANT FEATURES OF INDIAN MUSIC

by Dr. Geetha Ravikumar

Khyal

Khyal means imagination. It is so called because it is by nature imaginative both in regard to its subject matter and its interpretation. Unlike Dhruvapadas, it is not bound by any rigid rules except those pertaining to the use of the notes in the raga. The main distinction between Dhruvapadas and Khyal is in the greater latitude given to the latter with regard to improvisation, which takes the form of Vistara.

Khyal is an Urdu word, its literary meaning, a stray thought. In music, it means the extempore flight of imagination of an expert musician. Some are of the opinion that Hazarat Amir Khusru was the originator of Khyal singing, others say that Sultan Hussain Sherque of Jaunpur is to be credited for this great contribution to music.

There is enormous scope for a musician to express his own feelings, emotion and inspiration through various combinations of musical notes in each raga when singing the Khyal. This freedom was not granted to the Dhruvapad singers. The Khyal development may proceed either like an Aalap or straightaway with the words, in which case, the verbal texture is broken up into bits. Each bit is woven into the musical phrase, temporarily goes its own

way until it reaches the "Sam" ie. the climax of the rhythm, the point where the gathering momentum of the song exhausts itself for the time being but only to begin afresh

In the earlier Khyals, the influence of Dhruvapadas dominated and therefore a manly sonority and depth were found in them. The present day Khyals are more influenced by the Thumri style and hence are over-burdened with decorations. Like the latter-day Dhruvapadas, Khyal consisted of two sections : Sthayi and Antara. All kinds of embellishments and graces are used. The Khyal uses the compass of three octaves, giving scope for extreme elaboration. Taans of various kinds are profusely used. The larger compositions are sung in slow tempo time-measures like Jhumra Dhima (Vilambit) Ektal, Teental, Tilwada and shorter ones like Teental and Jhaptal.

There are four main types of Khyal singing, prevalent in the country today. One is the *Kirana School*, which was represented by the late Abdul Karim Khan and Waheed Khan of Lahore; next the *Gwalior School* represented by Abdullah Khan and Kadir Baksh Khan, who were brothers. They were reputed singers of Khyals and were considered Ustads. The *Agra School* sprang up from

Syamarang and Sadarang which has incorporated much of the Dhruvapadas and Hori Dhamar techniques and can be called the Khyal of Dhruvapad style known in India as Dhruvadang Khyal. The exponent of this school was the late Faiyaz Khan. *Jaipur School*, the fourth, is nearly 150 years old. The most famous exponent of this school was Rajab Ali Khan. There are many more schools following different styles of singing Khyal.

Dhamar or Hori

This is next in importance and sequel to Dhruvad. This type of song was generally sung on the occasion of Holi festival in autumn. This is sung only in the Tala known as "Dhamar" and that is why it is said to be "Dhamar". Its real name is "Holi" which later on misused by the professionals and came to known as Hori-Dhamar. In the beginning it was a type of folk song of Brindavan and Mathura. The main characteristic of this type of song is the measurement of tempo. It can develop the various forms of tempo in a fixed Tala in numerous proportions, for example the same piece of song may be sung in double, triple, quadruple and quintuple speed and even in the fractions such as one fourth, one and a half and quarter to two and so on. The specialists of this type of song are usually the masters in the calculation of rhythm i.e. tempo, whereas the Dhruvapada singers are considered to be the masters in proper intonation, production of sound and knowledge of Raga.

Raja Man Singh was a great patron of Dhruvapadas and the Dhamar style of singing and as a result both these musical forms flourished under his patronage and thousands of compositions of Dhruvapadas and Dhamar, unique of its kind, are still available and sung by the experts of these days.

Thumri

The word Thumri is derived from the word "Thumak" which means graceful stamping of foot. Thumri was introduced by Wazid Ali Shah, the late Nawab of Oudh, 1840 A.D. to 1870 A.D. He was a great lover of music, a poet, an excellent musician and also a patron of musicians. Thumri has its own beauty and characteristics and the Bol-taan offered greater scope for the expression of the subtle light and shades of the emotions and musical phrases, interlinked with words. Thumri expresses the nuance and overchanging perception of beauty with slight delicacy and fine touches, its lilting music amorous in its subject matter. The idea of Thumri unlike that of Khayal does not lie in the presentation of Raga in its purity but in the spiration of the minutest changes of the musical emotion of the artist. It is Shabdha Pradhan Gayaki. Thumri limits itself to the Sringara or erotic feeling, creates only touches of rasas, the subject matter is love, dealing with particular tempo or mood. It resorts to Bol-making. The Bol is an art by which an artist conveys his sacred moments of undoubted inspiration with musical

emotion with a particular temperament and range of his imagination. Banaras and Lucknow are famous for Thumri singing. The Kathak Gharana of these places are exceptionally interested in this type of song and they excel in singing the same.

Thumri cannot be sung in all the Ragas of the systems of Indian music. The Ragas like Khamaj, Tilak Kamod, Kafi, Pilu and Bhairavi are particularly useful for it. They are sung usually in Talas like Deepchandi, Punjabi Theka and Dadra.

Dadra

Dadra is very much similar to Thumri in structure, its beauty, and characteristics, elegance and refinement, and are identical in expression. Dadra type uses Dadra Taal, which is more older than the Thumri Taal. Dadra had its origin from simple bits of folk songs.

Tappa

The origin of Tappa is from Punjab and perhaps it was the folk song of that place. It was chiefly sung in olden days by the camel drivers and people of low standard and taste. The wordings of the songs express the emotion of love and passion in many ways and forms. The beauty of Tappa lies in the quick display of various permutations and combinations of notes. It was Gulam-nabi alias Shoree Miyan, who was responsible for the introduction of this form and also for its present beauty and elegance.

Tappa is a compound mixture of the fast Khyal and Thumri. Tappa comes from the root word "Tap" (short). It exhibits all the graces and is generally sung in medium tempo. It is sung in all the Raga-s and Tala-s that are particularly used in Thumri.

Tarana

Songs of this species are absolutely different from others. Words of meaning are not used in it. Some technical syllables of Sitar and Tabla Bani (Vani) are used in this type of musical form. It is sung in almost all the Raga-s of the current Raga-s of Hindustani music of this age. The wordings of the songs are generally of this type "Dhir-Dhir", Din, Tanum, Tana Dere Na, Dha-Kita, Alim Alum, etc., which carry no meaning, but musical ideas of the musician or of the composer. The beauty lies in the various combinations of notes that are used in it, in different forms.

Ghazal

Ghazal is a light musical form and is sung in Urdu language. Lyrics of Ghazal depicts only Sringara Rasa. Here the importance is given more to the lyrics and the meaning is elaborated and improvised. Hence Ghazals are more of Artha Pradhan Gayaki and is similar to Bhav Geet. It is sung in light ragas such as Desh, Kafi, Bageshri, Mand, Khamaj, Jinhoti and is set in Talas like Dhumali, Kheharva, Dadra and Roopak. In Northern India, Ghazal is otherwise known as "Ghazal Qawwali" or "Ghazal

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Dadra". Since more than two decades, Ghazal has taken an important place in Indian light classical music and has maximum aesthetic appeal and mass appeal.

Khajri

The lyrics in Khajri is composed in Vraja Basha and has an aesthetic appeal. The lyrics composed give description of Krishna Leela and Varsha Ritu. It is mostly sung in ragas like Kafi, Jinjhoti and Khamaj.

Lakshana Gita

It is the original musical compositions of the Sangeet Nayak late Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkande. They are composed of words, giving the definition and other conditions and characteristics of each Raga in brief. The songs are composed in Hindi and the language is very simple which enables all to understand and remember them without any difficulty. Lakshana Gitas are useful to music students and teachers

Swaramalika

It is commonly known as "Sargam", but its correct name is "Swaramalika". It is a simple composition of musical notes of a particular Raga set in different Talas. It is useful to the beginners. It helps one to remember the tune of the Raga in which it is set. It also helps one to have a proper intonation and correct modulation of the notes that are used in them, the most essential thing to practice in vocal and instrumental music.

PART TWO

In Carnatic music on the other hand, a study of the structure of present musical forms makes it clear that this music is maintaining the ancient traditions of the Prabhandhas more closely and rigidly than Hindustani music.

Sapta Svaras

This first lesson in music started the with Sapta Svaras viz., Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni in the Raga Mayamalavagowla set to Adi Tala and is followed by Janta Svaras (Double Triple notes), Tattu Svaras (jumping of notes) and Melsthai Svaras

Alankaras

The Sapta Tala Alankaras in Chatushra Jati Dhruva Tala, Chatushra Jati Matya Tala, Chatushra Jati Rupaka Tala, Mishra Jati Jhampa Tala, Tisra Jati Tripura Tala, Khanda Jati Ata Tala and Chatushra Jati Eka Tala, belong to Abhyasa Gana

Suladi is a composition very similar to the Sadharana Geetam but it is rendered in different tempos. Tala is given importance.

Geetam

The word Geetam denotes song, simplest musical form. There are no divisions of Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam. Generally, Geetam consists of ten or twelve avartanams. There are no sangatis in a Geetam and they are sung from the beginning till the end without any break. Geetams are taught

after Alankarams. We have Geetams in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Sanskrit. Some of the composers of Geetams are Purandaradasar, Tiger Varadachariar, Paidala Gurumurthy Sastri and Periyasami Thooran. There are two major divisions in Geetam namely, Sadharana Geetam also known as Samanya Geetam or Sanchari Geetam and secondly the Lakshana Geetam, ie. Janaka Raga Lakshana Geetam and Janya Raga Lakshana Geetam.

Svarajati

Svarajati is a longer composition than the Suladi or Geetam. After learning Geetam, students learn Svarajati. This helps students to learn Varnam well.

In Svarajati we have Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam. Syama Sastri, Swati Tirunal and Ponniah Pillai have composed Svarajatis. Some Svarajatis are used for Dance.

Jatiswaram

Jatiswaram is similar to Svarajati in form. But there is no Sahityam at all. It is also known by the word "Svara-Pallavi". Because we find combination of number of Jatis, hence the name Jatiswaram. Swati Tirunal and Ponniah Pillai have composed some fine Jatiswarams.

Varnam

This is one of the most important musical forms. During the training period this is considered to be the last item. But this is also often the first item in concerts. Thus it forms a major link between

Abhyasa Ganam and Sabha Ganam.

In Varnams, we find the beautiful sancharams of the particular ragam in which they have been composed. Students of music, specially the vocalists and instrumentalists will benefit a lot by practising vigorously the Varnams again and again. This will help them to sing or play the other musical forms like Kriti, Keertanams etc., beautifully and with proper Gamakams. In Varnam the Sahityam is brief. It refers to ideas of devotion or love or some patrons of music. It forms a main backbone and nutrient to enrich our Carnatic music.

The divisions of Varnams are Pallavi, Anupallavi, Mukthayi Svaram, Charanam and Charana Svarams. Charanam is also known by the terms — Upapallavi, Ettukadai Pallavi and Chittai Pallavi. Charana Svarams are also known as Ettukadai Svarams and Chittai Svarams. The Pallavi, Anupallavi and Mukthayi Svarams are together known as Poorvangam, and the Charanam and Charana Svarams are together known as Uttarangam.

We find a certain order in the arrangement of Ettukadai svarams in Aditala Varnams. The first two steps will consist of one Avartanam each. The next one will consist of two Avartanams. The next one will be of four Avartanams.

There are different kinds of Varnams namely Tana Varnam, Pada Varnam, Padajati Varnam and Ragamalikai Varnam.

Tana Varnam :- This kind of Varnam is in the form of Tanams. There is Sahityam

only for Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam. If one practices Varnams in two or three speeds, one will get a good knowledge of Svarasthanams and a good idea of the Talam. Tana Varnams have been composed not only in Adi Talams, but also in Talams such as Khanda, Chatushra Ata, Khanda Ata and Misra Jhampa. Varnams are sung at the beginning of the concerts, the concerts will have special flavour and both the performer and listeners will find it quite enjoyable.

Some of the composers of Tana Varnams are Syama Sastri, Pallavi Gopala Aiyar, Patnam Subrahmanya Aiyar, Tanjavur Ponniah Pillai and Swati Tirunal and many others.

Pada Varnam:- This kind of Varnam is meant for Dance. They are composed in Chowka Kalam. Some are also composed in Madhyama Kalam.

Padajati Varnam:- This is so called because some Jatis are distributed into the body of the Varnam.

Ragamalikai Varnam:- In this Varnam, each part will be in a different Ragam, for example: Navaragamalikai Varnam, Ghana Ragamalikai Varnam, etc., Some of the composers of Pada Varnams are Ramaswami Dikshitar, Muthuswami Dikshitar, Mysore Sadasiva Rao and Pallavi Seshaiyyar.

Kriti

In the melodic group, the Kriti is of fundamental importance. It is more highly evolved form of Kirtana, mainly due to the stress laid on musical aspects and

creativity. A major portion of concerts is devoted to the exposition of Kriti which forms the melodic entity in our Carnatic Music. A critical study of Raga can be analysed through the channel of expression, exposition and ornamentation (various gamakas, svara phrases, introduction of elongated vowels etc.) of Kriti-s. Through Kriti-s a performer can express their feelings adhering to the meaning of Sahityam, clearly pronounced with proper accent bringing out various Rasa-s. A performer must know the meaning of the Sahityam to experience a special pleasure to themselves as well as to the listeners in particular.

Kriti have three divisions namely, Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam. In some Kriti-s there will be no Anupallavi and in such Kriti-s, the Charanam is called "Samashti Charanam". Sometimes we find more than one Charanam, they may be either having the same pattern of Svarams.

Some composers of Kriti-s are Syama Sastri, Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar, Subbaraya Sastri, Mysore Sadasiva Rao, Veenai Kuppayar, Swati Tirunal, Patnam Subrahmanya Aiyar, Muthu Thandavar and many others

Lastly, a Kriti is ornamented or decorated by the Angam such as Sangatis, Madhyama Kala Sahityam, Chittai Svaram, Svara Sahityam, Sollukattu Svaram, Svaraksharam, Gamakam, Gopuccha Yati, Srotovaha Yati etc.

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Keertanai

This is a sacred musical form (Vaidika Ganam). The sahityam will be about praising God or begging pardon etc. Sahityam forms a major and more important place in Keertanai. It is said that Keertanai has evolved prior to the Kriti. We have three divisions in Keertanai namely, Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam. Sometimes we find some Keertanai-s without Anupallavi. We also find Keertanai-s with more than one Charanam. Persons with ordinary musical knowledge are also able to sing Keertanai-s because they are mostly composed in familiar Raga-s.

Some composers of Keertanai-s are Muthu Thandavar, Arunachala Kavirayar, Purandaradasar, Bhadrachala Ramdas, Thallapakkam Annamacharya, Narayana Theerthar, Tyagaraja, Gopalakrishna Bharathiar, Ramalinga Swami, Neelakanta Sivam, Papanasam Sivam and Periyasami Thooran.

Ragamalikai

The word Ragamalikai means a garland of Raga-s. The different parts of these compositions will be in different Raga-s. In Kalpita Sangeetam, we have Ragamalika Geetams, Ragamalika Svarajatis, Ragamalika Varnams and Ragamalika Keertanams.

Talamalikai is a musical composition in which each part is in different Talams. Here succession of Talams must be appropriate. It is also used in Manodharma Sangitam, specially while singing Pallavi.

Padam

This musical form is chiefly meant for Dance, especially as the theme of Nayaka-Nayaki relationship is well brought out in this form. Through the characters of Nayaka-Nayaki and Thozhi, the composers of Padams bring out many important truths. Padam has three divisions namely, Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam. Sometimes there may be more than one Charanam. There will not be many Sangatis.

Some of the great composers of Telugu Padams are Kshetragnar, Merattur Venkatramana Sastri, and for Tamil Padams the composers are Kavikunjara Bharatiyar, Muthu Thandavar and Vaidiswaran Koil Subbarama Aiyar.

Javali

The word Javali is derived from the Kannada word "Javadi" meaning a kind of lewd poetry. This musical form is also used for Dance. Javali has three sections, the Pallavi, Anupallavi and, the Charanam. Some of the great composers of Javali are Dharmapuri Subbarayar, Patabhi Ramaiyya, Patnam Subrahmanya Aiyar and Ramanathapuram Srinivasa Ayyangar. Javalis are composed in ordinary and Desya Raga-s.

Tillana

This musical form is composed in such a way as to create a sense of enthusiasm and joy. This is also greatly used in Dance concerts. It is generally in quick tempo. It has three sections

namely, Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam. Some compositions will have only Pallavi and Charanam. Generally, Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam will have different svara patterns. Pallavi and Anupallavi with Jatis and the Charanam with Svarams, Sahityam and Jatis.

Great composers who have composed Tillana are Mahavaidyanaatha Aiyar, Kundrukudi Krishnaiyer, Swati Tirunal and Ramanathapuram Srinivasa Ayyangar. The Tillanas composed by Lalgudi Jayaraman and Dr. Balamuralikrishna are quite famous

and are used in both Dance concerts and Vocal concerts.

Daru

It is a musical composition of a narrative style, generally adopted in the musical forms of Dance and Opera. It may express the feeling of love or describe the greatness of a generous person. It is usually set to Madhyama Kalam. It has three sections namely Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam. We find beautiful Darus in Arunachala Kavirayar's "Ramanatakam" □

(To be continued)

TRADITION IN KARNATIC MUSIC

(Continued from page 17)

reveal to the audience) sung extempore to chide a king for want of etiquette in a music congregation.

Another version by Prof. Sambamoorthy, is that Patnam Subramanya Iyer, enraged by the

contemptuous behaviour of a fellow-traveller at the Court, reversed his original intentions of singing the Pallavi, Chakkaga and substituted its notation with a sarcastic lyric. □

Courtesy: "Thought", June 1962



A Report

INTERNATIONAL VIOLIN CONFERENCE AT USA

by Dr. Mysore Manjunath

Indeed it was an amazing event for me to perform in the most reputed International Violin Conference at San Diego. I had never seen such a fabulous conference, exclusively meant for the Violin. There were about 450 participants and 21 outstanding invited violin performers in the conference. Each one of the 450 participants was a Violinist! Even participation was open only for violinists and each one of the participants got in to the conference with 1000\$ registration fee. I was among the 21 reputed invited violin performers/resource persons — representing 21 different systems of Music from all over the world. These 21 outstanding violinists represented 21 unique styles of music like, Western Classical music, European music, Jazz music, Country music, Arabic music, Bluegrass system of music, Swing Style, Chinese, Japanese music and so on. And I had the privilege of representing Indian Classical music and indeed it was considered an unique honor to represent our system. They considered Carnatic and Hindustani music as a single entity though

The two big hotels where we all stayed were full of only violinists, and I could not find anyone who did not play the violin! The eight day conference included violin concerts from 21 violinists, seminars, panel discussions, paper

presentations, clinics (workshop - classes at the advanced level) and all. We saw, heard, thought, discussed only about violin and nothing else! The place selected for the conference was the most spectacular Point Loma University Campus near the ocean.

I was scheduled to play on a Tuesday evening and a very surprising thing happened while I was doing the sound — mike check before the programme. Each one of us was given 30 minutes to perform.

When I started the sound check, some of the organizers listened in great amazement. They had never heard about Indian music, and even the way an Indian violinist sat down on stage to perform was something they had never seen before, as in all other styles, the violinist either stands or sits on the chair and plays the instrument

One of the senior officials, Mark O'Connor, who himself is a well known Jazz and country music violinist, heard me and got all pumped up. He rushed to get another organizer Gilles Apap, a renowned German classical violinist, and together they made an instant decision that I could play as long as I wanted and play last, as the "finale" for the day.

People there, had never heard Carnatic music. They were thrilled by its

pace and energy and were fascinated by the gamakas. Very interestingly no other system of music in world gives this much of importance and scope for improvisations as Indian music does. They all actually read the musical script and perform on the stage. After 30 minutes of playing, I was requested to play for another 45 minutes extra! At the

conclusion, the audience erupted into a rapturous ovation. It was an unprecedented six minute standing ovation. Several teachers and many of the 21 professional violinists made appointments to meet me for a violin class the next day.

That is the richness of South Indian Music. □

Music Competition 2004 - 05

The Sabhas 51st Annual Music Competition for the year 2004-05 will be conducted during February 2005. Over the years the Sabha has earned a place in the hearts of lovers of Fine Arts by its multifaceted activities for the promotion of Fine Arts. Under the scheme of promoting young talents, the Sabha is conducting an Annual Music Competition to encourage students learning music, both in Vocal and Instrumental. Response to the Music Competitions conducted by the Sabha is increasing year after year, with more and more students participating in all disciplines.

In all there are 44 Competitions for various age groups in Vocal, Veena, Violin and Mridangam in Carnatic music and Vocal, Sitar and Tabla in Hindustani music. The Annual Music Competitions have drawn competitors from all over the city and also from other major cities of the country. We solicit the same involvement by institutions and teachers this year also, by encouraging their students to participate in the Music Competition. The Sabha also owes a lot to the donors who have created Endowments for the conduct of Music-Competitions, as these Endowments support and encourage the Sabhas efforts in this noble venture.

Entry forms will be available from 15th December 2004 at the Sabha's office from 10 am to 1 pm and at the Vidyalaya's office between 1 pm and 8 pm on all week days. Entries will close on 15th January 2005.

A Report

DANCE SYMPOSIUM ON CHOREOGRAPHY

by A. Seshan

A Dance Symposium on Choreography was arranged by Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, Mumbai, on November 8 and 9, 2003. It was well attended by *natyacharya-s*, choreographers, students of Indian classical dances and *rasika-s*, both from the city and from other places. The total number of delegates was more than 500. The lecture-demonstrations during the days were supplemented by full-fledged dance programmes in the evenings, which were open to the public.

November 8, 2003

The Symposium had a good start with an invocatory dance by Anushree to the vocal music of Archana Venkatesh. The song was a rarely-heard piece on the "Ananda Nartanam" of Lord Ganesh composed by Oothukkadu Venkatasubbier. Under Lata Raman's competent choreography the many facets of Nartana Ganapati were brought out well.

After a welcome address by V Shankar, the President of the Sabha, the Symposium was inaugurated by L M Singhvi, President of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi. In a scholarly speech, he pointed out that though choreography is a Western concept the art is ours. It was in 1876 that the term was used for the first time

in France. The Director of ballet was then called choreographer. In India, Natya is considered as the fifth Veda. He highlighted the fact that Bharata's *Natya Sastra* is quite modern in that it is useful for reference not only today but for the day-after-tomorrow also. It was lost and rediscovered around 1894. However, the concepts dealt with therein had been in use all the time in the country. It was a tribute to the oral tradition and the *guru-sishya parampara*. He announced that the Indira Gandhi Centre would conduct an international seminar on *mudra-s* and he would very much like the Shanmukhananda Sabha to be associated with it and other programmes in the future in view of its recognition as a national institution. He was also happy to announce that Koodiyattam of Kerala had been recognised by the UNESCO as a heritage art worthy of preservation.

The Keynote Address was to be delivered by P V Subramaniam, popularly known as 'Subbudu'. As he could not be present on health grounds the text was read by P N Krishnamoorthy, Principal of the Sabha's Vidyalaya. Over more than half a century, Subbudu has built up a formidable reputation as an outstanding critic of both Indian classical music and dance. He is known to be frank and bold like the legendary 'fearless Nadia' of Hindi movies. He had, in the past, crossed swords with the high

and the mighty in the music and dance world on fine technical points. He himself once said that he would call a spade not a spade but a dirty agricultural implement! It is in that spirit that this reviewer offers his criticism of the address. Subbudu writes with authority on Western classical music also. Hence he knows that 'keynote' is the tonic note in the basic scale of a composition on which the remaining notes depend. Thus metaphorically a keynote address in a conference is expected to set the tone for the subsequent deliberations. The dance aficionados eagerly looked forward to know his views on choreography. There are many issues facing the choreographers, some of which are the unsatisfactory use of recorded music which, however, saves cost, trifurcation of the role of *nattuvanar* to which Adyar Lakshmanan made a pointed reference later, the optimal mix of *lokadharmi* and *natyadharmi*, tasteful and refined depiction of erotic *sringara* in *javali-s* and *padam-s* without compromising on *rasanubhava*, use of modern technology to enhance the appeal of dance dramas, the baleful influence of movies against which Indu Raman made a passionate plea in her Valedictory Address, the danger of established dancers moving away from their classical moorings in the name of modern or contemporary choreography and so on. The address was in the end shallow and disappointing. The undertone was flippant not in tune with the serious, scholarly and sombre

ambience prevailing in the auditorium. One had an uneasy feeling that it was a quick job done to satisfy the organisers by the rehashing of some of the old reviews he had written, no doubt, laced with enough *hasya rasa* of his brand to keep the audience tickled. Caught in a time warp, he made a reference to the sandalwood smuggler Veerappan in a context when he did not exist as a person wanted by the police in their 'combing' operations. He made a funny reference to a dancer (not named, for obvious reason) who interpreted 'kanmani' by referring to the eyes (*kan*) and a temple bell (*mani*) in her *mudra-s*! Many felt that no trained dancer, even if she did not know Tamil, would have used that absurd second *mudra*. Probably it was made up with a view to titillating the audience, which it certainly did. He says that 'kanmani' means darling. The literal meaning is the pupil of the eye. Metaphorically it means one who is as precious as the eye. So using the *mudra* for the eye is appropriate (not the one for temple bell!). Subbudu was not fair when he said that mostly those who failed to make a mark in classical dance resorted to contemporary dance. As far as this writer knows, most of today's famous choreographers have moved to contemporary dance after establishing their names in pure classical performances. It is a consequence of the artiste's unsatisfied and never-ending quest for new horizons as in the case of Padma Subrahmanyam and Anita Ratnam about whom he was effusive in

praise. The transcript of the address was marked by syntactic, spelling and stylistic errors. It is indeed unfortunate that one has to offer such a criticism of a venerable elderly gentleman who has recently been honoured with an award from the Sangeet Natak Akademi. It was a lost opportunity to stimulate a lively discussion. He cannot, however, be faulted. He said that he was not willing to undertake the assignment but was pressurised to do so. Probably it was because of the glamour attached to his name.

Session I

Kalanidhi Narayanan: Aesthetics of Rasa in Individual Choreography

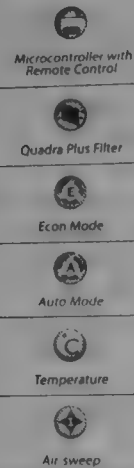
Kalanidhi Narayanan today occupies a place in the world of Bharatanatyam, especially in relation to *abhinayam*, once adorned by Balasaraswati. She explained how the *stayibhava* of the dancer makes the audience realise the corresponding *rasa*. Among the *rasa-s* *shanta* cannot be expressed. It means quiet inactivity. In the case of *hasya* one laughs about something. She demonstrated the *rasa-s* by doing *abhinayam* to various songs some of which were *Jagadodharana* (Hindustan Kapi - *Bhakti*), *Eththaikkandu* (Kalyani - *Bibhatsa*), *Etta Irundu Pesum* (Kapi - *Bhayanaka*), *Suradisuran Yaro Enru* (Sankarabharanam - *Hasya*), a song in Mohanam for *Veera* and one in Nadanamakriya for *Karuna*. It is

essential to pick up the *stayibhava* early on and maintain it till the end. In a song there is only one *stayibhava* but in a dance drama there may be many. In the case of some *rasa-s*, it is possible to show a couple of others also. However, there is not much scope to elaborate them. But in *sringara*, with its triad of *bhakti*, *vatsalya* and *rati*, it is possible to cover the entire gamut of all the other *rasa-s* too. She demonstrated this by taking the example of that perennial favourite of artistes and audiences alike, viz., *Krishna Nee Begane Baro* in Yamunakalyani, and doing *sanchari-s* therein. By coaxing, cajoling, and scolding child Krishna and so on she could show that the *vatsalya sringara* of the song could accommodate other *rasa-s* too. For once this writer understood why *sringara* is considered as the queen of *rasa-s* and has been emphasised by *vaggeyakara-s* like Kshetragna. She cautioned dancers against overdoing *jati-s*, *korvai-s*, etc., for *bhakti rasa*. If they are done for a song like *Natanam Adinar* (Vasanta), the *bhakti rasa* is gone.

K. Kalyanasundaram: Laya Intricacies and Abhinaya Nuances in Natya Nataka

KK is the last living legend of the Mumbai Naalvar (The Foursome of Mumbai) who brought Bharatanatyam to what was then called Bombay around the middle of the last century. The others were Kuppiiah Pillai, Govindaraja Pillai and Mahalingam Pillai, ably supported

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by Karunambal. He is one of the few *nattuvana*-s who have been trained not only in *nattuvangam* but in dancing, singing and mridangam also. Starting with "*Paalum Teli Tenum*" of Avvaiyar, he demonstrated the themes of his talk with the help of his students, including his son Harikrishna, who belongs to the seventh generation of the family. *Kauthuvam*-s in Shanmukhapriya and Vasanta, performed during *Brahmotsavam* in temples, were taken up. The *laya* intricacies were explained. *Abhinayam* was brought in all its varied manifestations in songs set to Brindavana Saranga and Suddha Dhanyasi and Andal's "*Varanamayiram*" from *Nachchiyar Tirumozhi*, in Neelambari, Arabhi, Nattakkurinji and Hamsanandi. Bharatiyar's "*Solla Vallayo Kiliye*" in Surati was of absorbing interest. The highlight was an excerpt from *Tirukkutralak Kuravanji* dealing with the dream of Vasantavalli where Siva promises to marry her. The *tirumanam*-s, abridged from the original, were crisp. He showed how *laya* could be used to bring out the mood. This writer was reminded of an excellent lec-dem by C V Chandrasekhar and his daughter Manjari on the subject of rhythm as signifiers of rasa at the 21st Natya Kala Conference at the Krishna Gana Sabha in Chennai in December 2001. The programme ended with a group *tillana* not frequently seen on the stage.

Two points stood out. In the first place, good choreography requires inspiring lyrics. This is a view in contrast

to that held by some who emphasise the mimetic aspect of dancing. Secondly, there was perfect coordination in the movement of the limbs in group dances, which was aesthetic. At any point of time the hand and leg positions were the same for all the dancers, which is unfortunately not observed in the case of many group performances. This writer believes that in the *sastra*-s it is one of the *lakshana*-s of *anga suddha* (or purity of *adavu*) called *hastakshetra*. *Aharya* was attractive. It was a matter of satisfaction that young Harikrishna could provide support on mridangam when he was not dancing. It would be invidious to single out any dancer or member of the orchestra for special mention as they were uniformly of a high standard. Still this reviewer feels that he would be failing in his duty if he does not mention the name of the singer Vidya. She has a mellifluous and resonant voice aligned very well to *sruti*. While she may continue to provide support to dance programmes she should consider advanced training in vocal music as she has the potential to become a good classical musician.

Session II

Asha Joglekar: Chakkars as a Signifier of Kathak - Choreographic Application

Asha Joglekar has made a mark as a leading dancer, choreographer and teacher in Kathak. She spoke in Marathi. However, it did not detract from the enjoyment of the visual aspect of the

presentation proving that, like music, dance is a universal language. With the help of her students she explained different types of *chakkar* by dancing to songs in Keervani and other *raga*-s. A piece set to Bhoop in 15 *matra*-s was also demonstrated. The programme ended with a *hori* in Bageshwari.

Once a research-minded ENT specialist of Chennai observed a street dance (*terukkoothu* in Tamil). He found that the male dancer was doing *chakkar* only in a clock-wise direction. He asked him to do it anti-clockwise also. Due to the loss of balance the dancer fell down while attempting it. This reviewer is always fascinated by the vigorous *chakkar*-s in both directions done by classical dancers of Kathak.

At the 21st Natya Kala Conference, referred to earlier, Kumudini Lakhiya pointed out how costumes in Bharatanatyam are very well designed for the body and show each movement of the dance. She said that unfortunately in Kathak the dancers tend to overdress and wear too much loose fabrics hanging around them posing an obstacle to movements. Asha Joglekar's troupe was in colourful costumes forsaking the mandatory white dress and there was no hindrance in movements, which exuded *joie de vivre*.

Darshana Jhaveri: Rhythm Patterns in Manipuri emphasising Rasleela and Sankirtan

The Jhaveri Sisters have become synonymous with Manipuri dance.

Darshana, a member of the group, has been honoured for her contributions in documenting the various Manipuri traditions and for making the dance popular outside Manipur, not only in India but abroad also. She has specialised in both *tandava* and *lasya* elements and drum playing. She referred to the two branches of *Rasleela*, viz., *Kartal Cholom* (with big cymbals) and *Pung Cholom* (with drums). *Sankirtan* is a form of worship. The most important and difficult composition on *taal* Rajmel is from slow tempo, representing pilgrimage to Nawadvip and Vrindavan to the quickening *bol*-s (syllables) of the *mridang* indicating three stages of union with god ending in an ecstatic finale. The entire happening in Vrindavan, as indicated by the songs, and *cholom* (dance with *kartal* and *mridang*), is believed to have been conceived by Lord Chaitanya. The *sankirtan* ends with *Mridang (Pung)* players striking the syllables representing 'Jay Bhairav Chaitanya Nityai' invoking Chaitanya and Nityai. *Rasleela*-s (dance dramas) portraying stories of divine love of Lord Krishna and Radha are believed to have been visualised by Lord Chaitanya. They are always preceded by *sankirtan*. Manipuri *guru*-s have devoted their entire lives in pursuit of *Mridang* and have contributed to the rich storehouse of *tala*-s and rhythm patterns by innovating new time variations and intricate rhythm patterns within the prescribed framework. The time measures range from 4 to 68 beats. (To get a comparative

perspective, a *tillana* composed by Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer in Simhanandana *tala* of Carnatic music has 128 beats in one rhythmic cycle.) They are classified into *Shuddha* (pure), *Shalag* (combination of two *tala*-s in the basic time cycle) and *Sankirna* (combination of more than two *tala*-s in the basic time cycle). The selection and the compositions of rhythm patterns follow the spirit of the dance. Some rhythmic patterns are appropriate to dance in a forceful *tandava* mode and others in a delicate *lasya* style. *Rasleela*-s are the extension of *sankirtan* and have the same *tala* system.

The demonstration brought out the *laya* aspects clearly. Radha-Krishna *sanchar* in Mangalacharan, dancing to *swara*-s (*swara prabandha*-s), *tillana*, the cycle of *madhya-drut-madhya laya*-s, the acrobatic *cholon tandava* and the use of drum in the thunder sequence were all aspects of Manipuri constituting a new experience with educational value to many in the audience.

Anita Ratnam: Concepts of Indian Ballet - Traditional and Contemporary - A Comparison

Anita Ratnam has made a name for herself as a mature and imaginative artiste in the world of both traditional and contemporary dance. She has been exposed to dance in the international context and has choreographed a large number of contemporary dances with specific themes besides classical dances. She has had the benefit of training in not only Bharatanatyam but

Mohini Attam and Kathakali also and interaction with martial and folk artists. She has, however, spent most of her recent years in choreography. She spoke on how to incorporate traditional motifs in group choreography. She pointed out that a constant challenge is to be rooted to the ground in one's own basic training in traditional motifs but still allow the imagination to float freely going beyond the rigid rules of classical dance. In this context she recalled her pioneering work in such dramas as *Panchajanyam*, *Purush*, *Gajanana*, *Daughters of the Ocean* and *Naachiyar*. Her first attempt in *Panchajanyam* was a unique experience. Sri Krishna's life was taken from Vaishnavite texts but was given a new treatment that pleased the eye but could not stand the critics' analysis. They wondered whether it was dance or theatre! In *Poems for the Eye*, based on Tamil Sangam poetry, which cannot be easily set to *raga*-s and *tala*-s, she chose to just have the verses spoken and used instrumental music and *swara*-s as complements. Props were taken from everyday life like brass pots, pounding sticks and earthen pot of water. While the 'choreography' used Bharatanatyam in its classical purity it was interspersed with the natural, and not stylistic, movements of women even as they combed their hair, dressed and bathed. The system of training the body in Bharatanatyam lays emphasis on softness, suggestion and delicacy. While essentially a solo format, today's group dynamics needs a different system of



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training altogether. Awareness of space, confidence of the dancing body as a painter drawing on a blank canvas and a shift from the obsession with the centre as primary focus all need a totally revamped methodology. The dancer as the mute executor of the singer's lyrics and the drummer's beats was also challenged in *Gajaanana* when the performers themselves danced, sang, drummed and chanted. In *Daughters of the Ocean*, which this writer had seen in Mumbai a few years back, traditional motifs like the lotus, arrow, lion, a flowing river and a vast ocean were all used as mental images to create a group effect of water in constant motion. *Naachiyar* explored new vistas which are described later in the review of Anita's performance on the next day.

Sachin Shankar: Concepts of Indian Ballet - Traditional and Contemporary - A Comparison

Sachin Shankar belongs to the *avant-garde* movement of modern Indian dance pioneered by Uday Shankar. He is among the artistes who popularised ballet as a form of free movement, which has its own aesthetic values unconstrained by traditional concepts. He had taken his dance troupe to 16 villages of Rajasthan as early as 1956 when ballets were yet to catch public attention even in cities. Perhaps the term 'ballet' was used by him for the first time when he formed his Ballet Unit in August 1953. He has thus been in the field for half a century.

He has used the ballet as a medium for expressing his feelings. He referred to the eternal appeal of classical dances of India. Like the full moon coming out in the sky fresh, akin to pure silver, classical dance will always remain unchanged and will not lose its originality and charm. Nevertheless, the creative urge in talented dancers will continue in the new form of choreography and direction. He referred to some of his works, the challenging amongst them being Nehru's *Discovery of India* and another one on Gandhi. Truly speaking, a compromise has to be made in choreographing such themes and there is some deviation from the original movements of classical dances. Self-expression is what every human being craves for, whether a carpenter, scientist, writer or even a housewife preparing delicious dishes, the last of which he would call choreography in the kitchen! To be an accomplished artiste one should have the urge to create. Secondly, he should widen his horizon by exploring the available treasures of knowledge by reading books and interacting with the great artistes in the field.

With the help of his students in simple costumes he embarked on a journey of exploration in his demonstration. Even such a simple act like walking in groups calls for certain artistry and discipline to bring out an aesthetic effect. A dance using rope was appreciated by the audience. Movements could be made without any

song and hence dispensing with the need to interpret — the focus of many classical dances. His students are put through rigorous physical exercises to have a complete control over their bodies.

Priyadarshini Govind's Dance Performance: An Evening of Rasa Exposition - Navarasa-s in Margam

Priyadarshini has been a student of Rajaratnam and Kalanidhi Narayanan. Though young, she has already established her reputation as an accomplished artiste both in India and abroad. She started with an *alarippu* in Hamsadhwani and Arabhi followed by Ganesh Vandana and a *ragamalikai* in Rupakam composed by Sitaramiah. The *utplavana-s* were executed well. The highlight of the evening was the *Navarasa Shloka* from *Soundaryalahari* of Adi Sankara wherein the nine *rasa-s* of Devi Nityakalyani were brought out. The *raga-rasa* interface was interesting. The wedding of Devi with Lord Sundareswara exuded *shringara* in Khamas. A few examples of the *rasa-s* explored were: *bibhatsa* - Saveri, *raudra* - Mohanam, *adbhuta* - Arabhi, *bhayanaka* and *hasya* - Kaanada. There was no *shloka* in the verse for *shanta*. So Priyadarshini rounded off with a deep meditative pose to express that *rasa*. Incidentally, Bharata mentions only eight *rasa-s*, *shanta* being absent. According to scholars like Dr V Subramanyam the ninth *rasa* was incorporated as a result of the influence of Buddhism. Probably

it was taken from a typical statue of Buddha in meditation. It is evident that in Adi Sankara's time the ninth *rasa* did not exist. It would be a good field for research to find out the exact period when *shanta* was incorporated in dance as the ninth *rasa*.

"*Karunakari*" was danced to in a *ragamalikai* including Todi, Kambodhi, Nayaki, Bhairavi, Mohanam and Bhupalam embellished by *chittaswaram-s* ending in the reverse order of the *raga-s*. The *jaru* was executed effortlessly. There was flawless footwork and *azhuttam* in *teermanam-s* in this and other pieces. "*Sivadikshaparu*" in Kuranji portrayed the conflict in the mind of the *nayika*. She has taken a vow to adhere to Saivism but her heart belongs to Krishna, a Vaishnavite god. The lips say 'no' but the heart 'yes' to Krishna. The second highlight of the evening was the portrayal in "*Samayamidhe*", a *javali* in Behag, of a *parakiya*, a *nayika* wedded to one man and dallying with another. The coquetry of the woman was brought out with impressive imagination. After the husband is gone she invites her illicit lover to come to her. He need not worry about her father-in-law, who is old and not sharp enough to observe the goings-on in the house. The sun has gone down and the moon is rising and it is the right time for him to be with her. So what is he waiting for? All the entreaties and blandishments were portrayed very well. A *shloka* from Krishna Karnamrutham described the Lord as seen by different

people in different ways - a friend, Yama, huge mountain, little child and so on. A *Kavadichindu* of Oothukkadu Venkatasubbier in Mohanam, *Simhendramadhya* in Yamunakalyani, Begada, Athana and Bouli described the benefit of chanting Krishna's name. The popular *tillana* of Balamuralikrishna in Kathanakuthuhalam was the penultimate item vigorously danced to its complex *jati-s*, after which there was a *sawal-jawab* sequence between the dancer and the mridangist. The *addami-s* were artistic. The programme ended with *Vande Mataram* in Desh. In short, it was an evening well spent. Thanks to the generosity of the Sabha the bonanza was available not only to the delegates but also to the public free. The auditorium was full.

The programme brought out the importance and power of communication through eyes (*Netrabhinaya*). The eyes are the windows to the mind and soul of

the dancer. What can be expressed through them cannot be done through any other limb. The rest of the body must be made to move in support of the message conveyed through the eyes. This was brought out in a telling manner earlier in the day when, at some point of time, Kalanidhi Narayanan had given her demonstration of *rasa-s* while sitting. Priyadarshini's programme was supported by excellent introduction to each item. It was obvious that she had completely imbibed the essence of the *abhinaya* school of her famous guru. *Netrabhinaya* is her forte. There is a saying that the absence of eye movements in performing would be like the dance of a headless body (*Kabandha Nrityam*). Her large eyes were fluid enough to convey the emotions without anyone looking at her body movements reminding one of the legendary Kamala.

(To be continued)

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Book Review**SCINTILLATING SEMMANGUDI SAGA**

"Semmangudi Oru Sagaptham" by Shankar Venkataraman; Published by Sarigamapadani, Chennai; Pp 288; Price Rs. 150/-

Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer passed away on October 31, 2003 at the ripe age of 95. The book under review is, perhaps, the first of the volumes on Semmangudi that have emerged. It is universally acknowledged that the best biography of George Bernard Shaw is the one by Hesketh Pearson. The reason for this lies in the simple fact that Shaw himself had seen the book in its entirety before publication and written several portions. A similar claim can be made for this volume too as Semmangudi had carefully gone through the book before its publication.

Actually, it is not a single volume on the life and work of the great artist but an amalgam of biography, tributes and articles by and on Semmangudi, mostly in Tamil. There are a few articles in English. At the outset, one must declare that there is a profusion of pictures in black and white which add significantly to the charm of the book.



The author begins with a brief biography of Semmangudi, beginning with his training at the age of eight under his cousin, the violinist Narayanaswami Iyer. Later came Gottuvadyam Sakharana Rao, whose ill-health sent the student back to Narayanaswami Iyer. This strict cousin ensured that for long years the disciple practised for at least 10 hours a day. At the age of 16 Semmangudi was apprenticed to Maharajapuram Vishwanatha Iyer who turned out to be even more strict. The singer's debut in the Nageswara Temple in Kumbakonam in 1926 was truly memorable. There was an audience of 10 to 15 persons who were prevented

by heavy rains from going out of the temple. That same year another important event occurred in Semmangudi's life. He got married to Thayammal.

The Madras Music Academy was inaugurated in 1927 and Semmangudi had an opening in a Metropolis when he sang at the Conference of the Indian National

Congress held in this Academy. A turning point in his life came when Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar recommended his name for editing the kritis of Swati Thirunal. Sir C.P. Ramaswami Iyer, the Dewan of Travancore ensured his appointment as the Principal of the Swati Thirunal Music College at Trivandrum. This was the beginning of the Golden era of the artist's life. He had access to a number of new artists and a variety of musical instruments and also experience of great value in building his style and performance. Venkataraman gives a succinct account of these glorious years of Semmangudi.

'Fascinating' is the word to describe the second part of the book which contains a series of articles, reminiscences, stories and anecdotes by Semmangudi himself. One becomes privy to a number of important facets of the life and achievements of Semmangudi. A few are worth recalling here.

At one concert in 1928 of Kaliakudi Vaidyanatha Iyer, Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar played on the violin and Maharajapuram Vishwanatha Iyer played the mridangam. Varakur Periyaval taught Semmangudi the compositions of Sadasiva Brahmendra, most famous of which were "Bruhi Mukundeti" and "Manasa Sancharare". The reverence in which he held Swati Thirunal comes out in the fact that he called him Dakshina Bhoja Raja and edited 400 kritis by the Maharaja.

Especially Semmangudi valued Swati Thirunal's encapsulating in six parts the essence of Ramayana in that classic kirtana "Bhavayami Raghu Ramam". Semmangudi had great regard for Papanasam Sivan. In most of the concerts, artists sing from the almost 400 kirtanas of Sivan. Semmangudi had given swaras to his Tamil compositions. Then there is the hilarious incident of Semmangudi's uncle Krishna Iyer teaching the young Rajaratnam Pillai. He would do it with the violin in one hand and the bow in the other. Once while teaching he lost temper and hit Rajaratnam Pillai with the bow on his nose! Later on the great Nadaswaram artist used to say how he acquired fame because of that mighty blow from the mighty bow of his guru! Semmangudi recalls that "Mohana" ragam was the monopoly and property of the Maharajapuram family and none could render that raga better than anyone in that family. Of Maharajapuram Santhanam, Semmangudi declared that "he is famous for Saairam and Sariram"! M.S and Sadasivam come in for high praise, especially the religious fervour of any M S concert and the magic voice of that great artist. He is especially grateful to Sadasivam for introducing him to Kalki, Rajaji, Sankaracharya of Kanchi and other great persons. Sadasivam used to joke that "Semmangudi is my wife's music teacher and my rummy teacher"!

Some of the facets of the singer were that he had no composition of his



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own, he never went abroad and declared himself against Fusions and Jugalbandis. The author gives a list of 50 songs, for rendering which Semmangudi won acclaim. Semmangudi loved to fly kites and was over-fond of mangoes. There was a memorable occasion when he ate a dozen mangoes and spoiled his voice. Rigorous practice for over 10 hours a day restored it. Semmangudi waxes eloquent of the therapeutic virtues of snuff. He was one royal sniffer!

MSG, Vinayakram and Nalli Kuppuswami. There is a very good article by Palai Ramachandran who claims to be Semmangudi's only disciple who was allowed to sing along with the Guru at many concerts.

The book (financed by the Nallis) carries a message from the Sankaracharya of Kanchi as also a preface by the ex-President, R. Venkataraman.

One wishes that the book had been printed on Art paper which would have brought out with greater clarity the number of excellent black and white photographs. We had recently such books on Ravi Shankar, Amjad Ali Khan and M S Subbulakshmi. The volume is strongly recommended to all lovers of music and admirers of Semmangudi. It is undoubtedly a significant contribution to the world of Carnatic music. □

- P. P. Ramachandran

Shri. Lakshminarayanan passes away

Noted vocalist Vairamangalam Shri Lakshminarayanan passed away on 12th August 2004 at Chennai after a brief illness. He was 75. He was a disciple of the renowned musician, Kalaimamani T. K. Rangachari, whom he joined in 1948 and provided vocal support to him in concerts for a long time. He made his concert debut at the Thanjavur Bangaru Kamakshi Amman Temple. Known for his adherence to classical purity and to the rich tradition of Carnatic music, till the very end, Shri Lakshminarayanan did not dilute his musical presentations to cater to the masses. Though in later days he did not perform much, his concerts had an aura of freshness and were highly creative and innovative. He was also noted for his crisp presentations and had a satisfying musical voice.

Shri Lakshminarayanan has received awards from the Music Academy and has been giving concerts since 1955 on the AIR and at the Sabhas. He has also had several concert tours abroad. He had an extensive repertoire which contained many compositions of Mysore Sadashiva Rao, Veenai Kuppier and Koteeswara Iyer. He was awarded the Kalaimamani by the Tamil Nadu Government. A very dedicated and sincere teacher, he was on the staff of the Kalakshetra for many years. His passing away is indeed a very great loss to the music world.